

Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station.

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THE CENTERS OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IN OHIO

By L. H. GODDARD

Where are the Centers of Agricultural Production in Ohio?

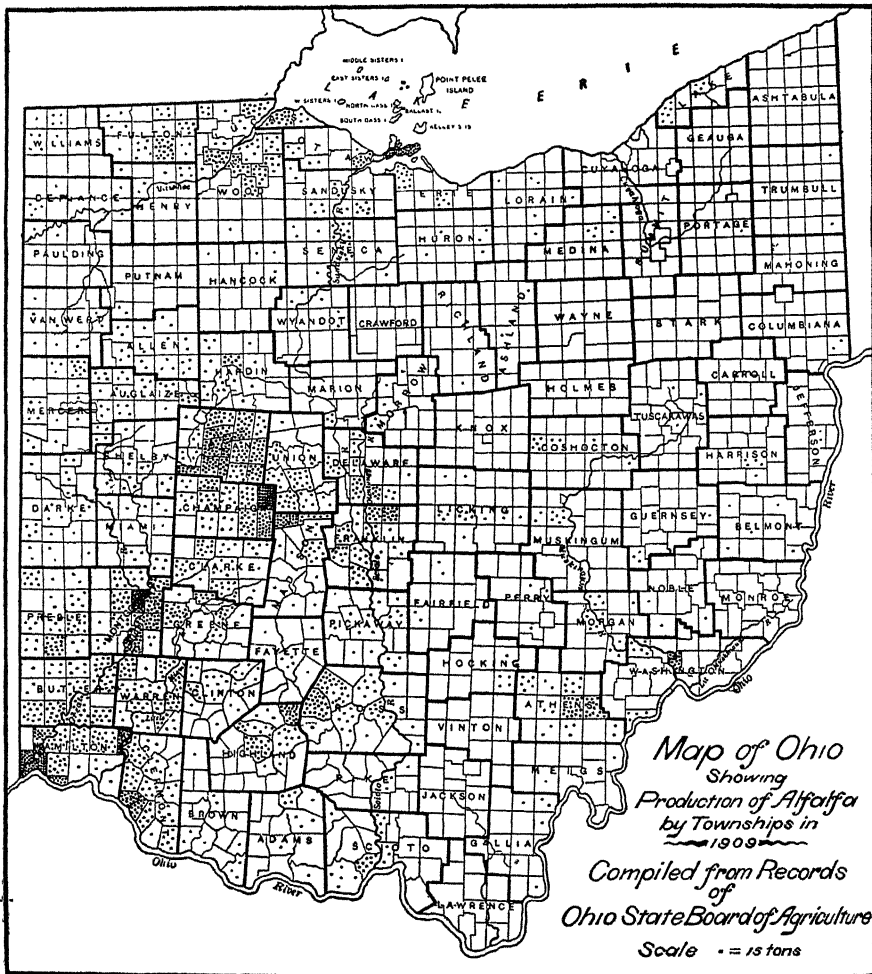
Why are they so Located?

Are they Spreading or are they Contracting?

Are New Centers Springing Up as the Years Go By?

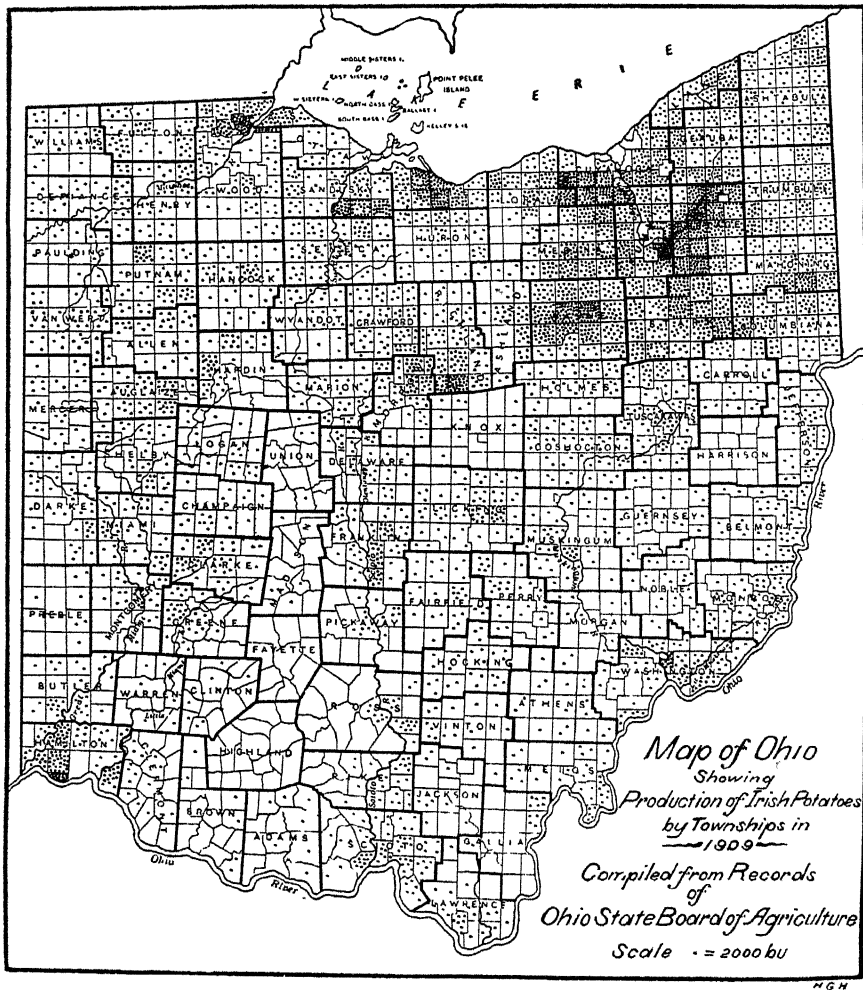
The day has come when progressive farmers wish to know in detail regarding the methods which successful farmers in other sections are following. This fact has long been true of the other professions, but until late years the conservatism of farmers has sufficed to keep them satisfied with the methods that have been handed down to them through several generations of their immediate ancestors. All this has changed now. In these days it is no uncommon experience to meet a farmer who is traveling throughout his State or into other States to observe the crops, livestock and farming methods that are in use on other farms. It is well that this is so. Money spent on such trips of inspection, providing they are well planned, is well spent. An important feature of the work of the Experiment Station is the study of the methods that are used by successful farmers. It is called "Farm Management Investigations."

The planning of these trips of inspection and investigation is not an easy matter. It is undoubtedly interesting and in many cases wise, to study the work of farmers who are successful largely because of their own personality, but in so doing it must be borne in mind that this personality cannot be copied. Unless a farmer is very sure of his own personal ability and resourcefulness in overcoming obstacles which he may meet, it is hardly advisable for him to undertake to follow a new method which he has observed in some other section unless a number of the more progressive farmers in that section have been so impressed with the desirability of the method that they have undertaken and have been able to

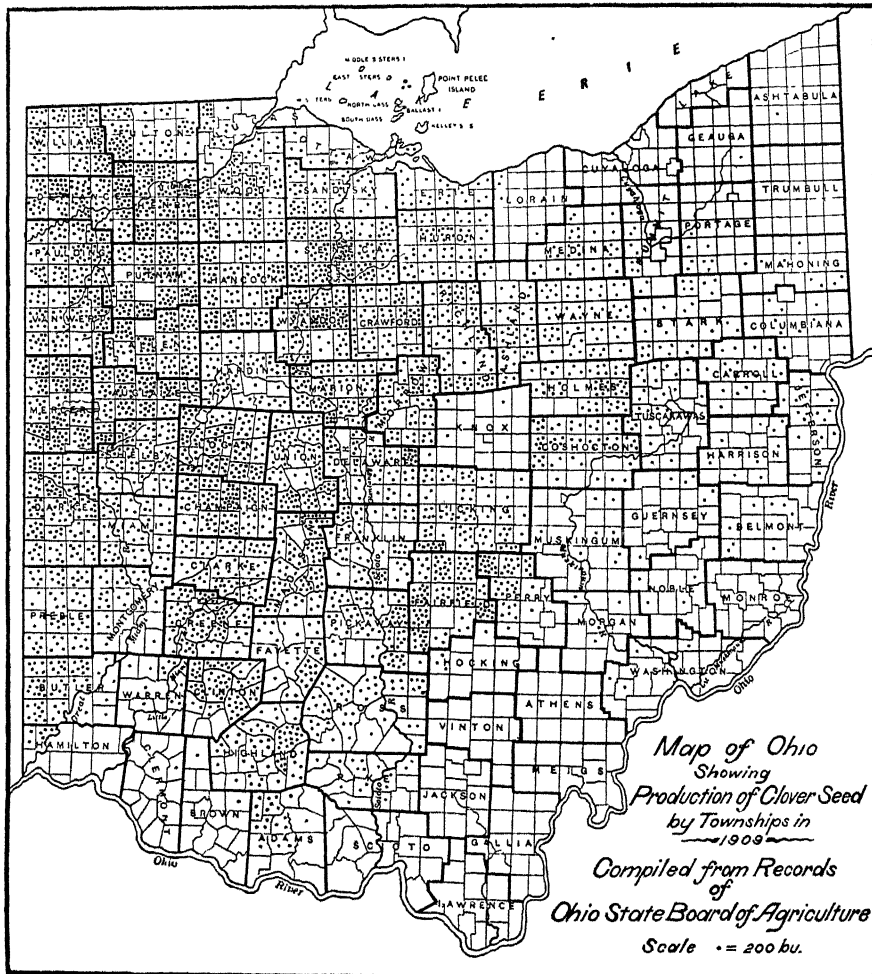


follow it successfully. When they have done this they will have formed a center of production. The more successful the method the more extensive this center of production will become.

In order to be able to find more quickly these centers of production of the various crops and farm products, the Experiment Station has prepared a number of maps on which are plotted graphically the agricultural statistics which are gathered by the township assessors, compiled by the county auditors and then turned over to the Secretary of the State Board of Agriculture. This opportunity is taken to thank the State Board of Agriculture for permission to prepare these maps from its records.



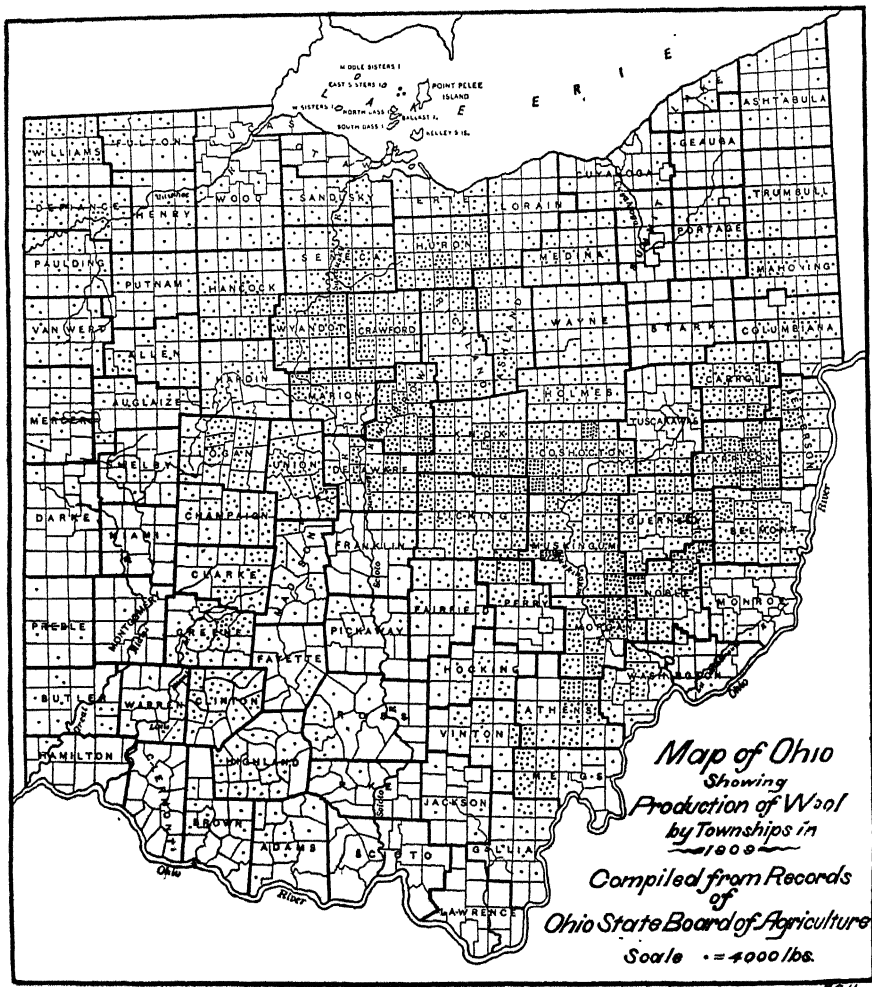
On the following pages are shown a few of these maps. In examining them it will be observed that each dot on the map represents a given number of pounds, bushels, gallons, tons, acres or individuals that were reported for the township on the map of which the dots are placed and that the greater the number of dots in the map of any township the greater the reported production of that township of the product in mind. On the other hand, it must be remembered that the entire absence of dots from the map of any township does not indicate that none of the crop was produced in that township, but that not enough of it was reported to entitle it to



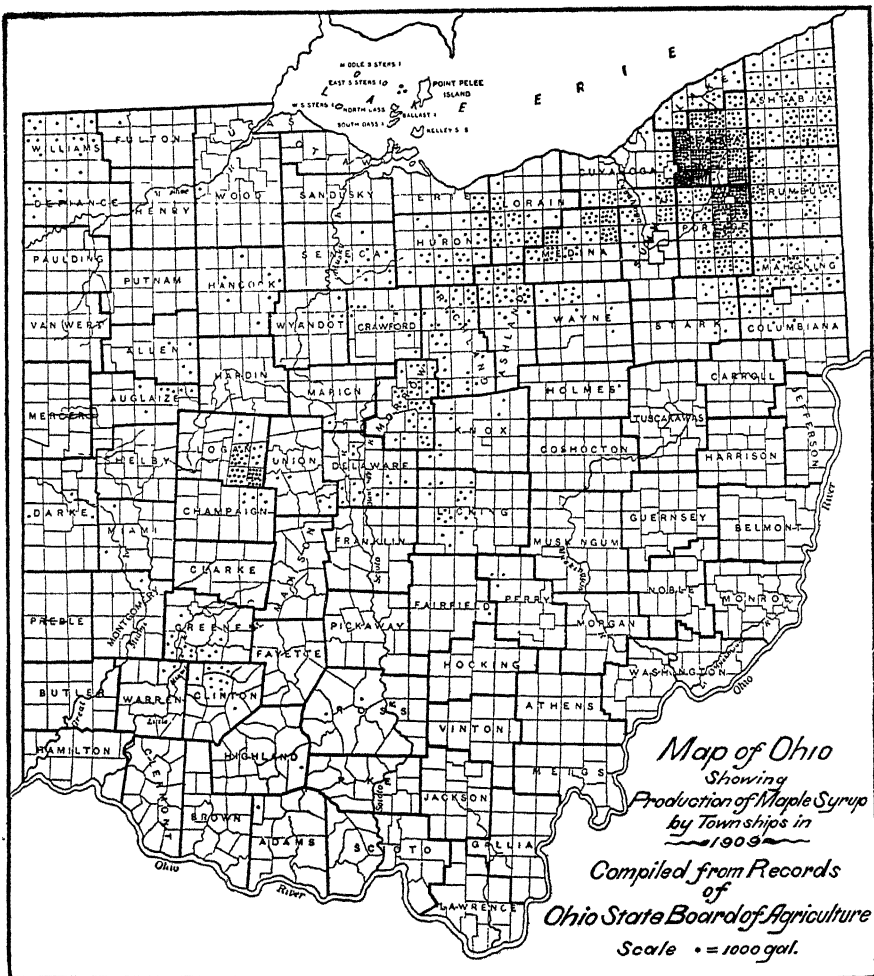
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a single dot. For instance, unless the report of a township shows more than 5,000 bushels of corn it would have no dot on the corn map. It should also be remembered that the maps in this circular were prepared from statistics gathered by the assessors in the spring of 1909 and represent in most cases 1908 production.

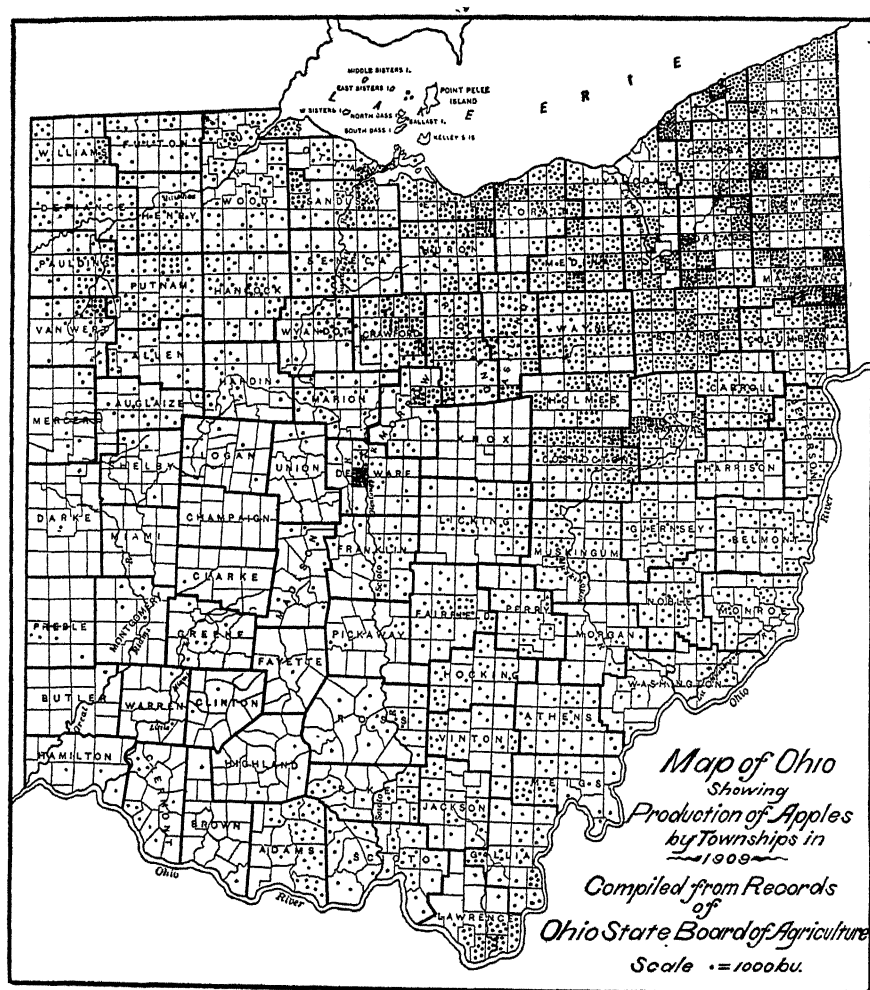
By an examination of these maps, what is meant by a center of production will become clear. For instance, the major center of production of tobacco is in parts of Darke, Miami, Preble, Montgomery and Warren counties. The minor centers are in Adams, Gallia, Noble and Belmont, Medina and Wayne counties. The map of oat production will show that according to these statistics the



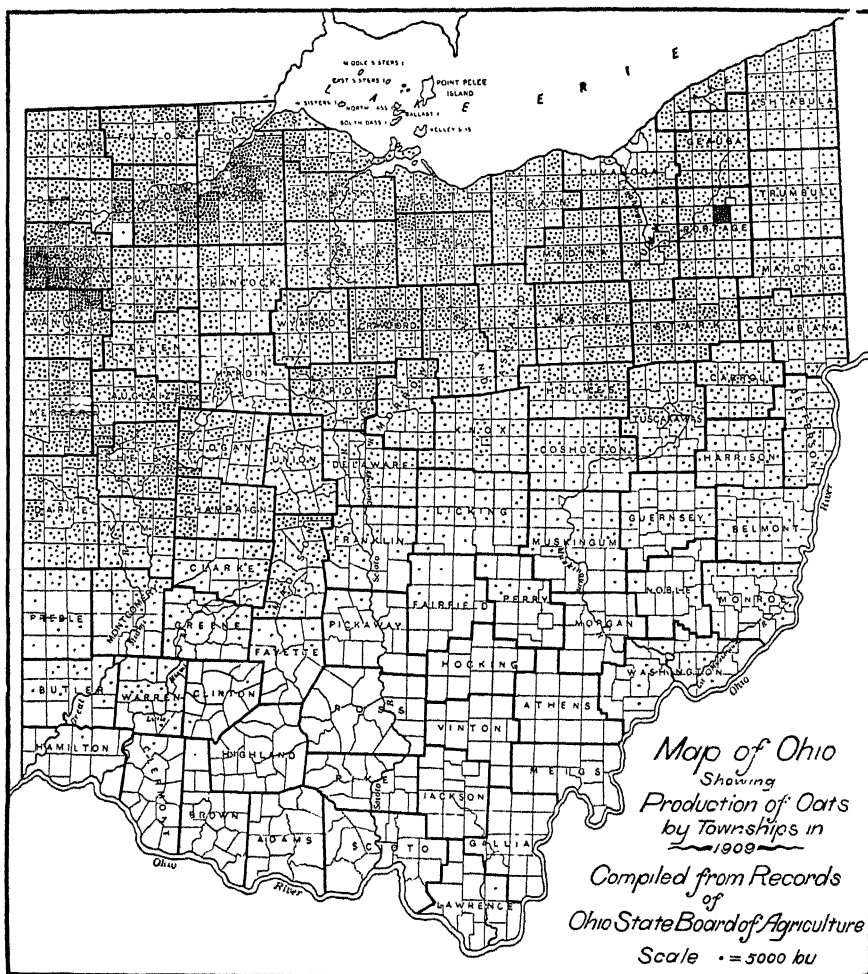
major part of the crop for the year mapped was produced pretty generally throughout the northern part of the State, with Paulding county as perhaps the greatest center of production. In Champaign and Logan counties on the alfalfa map will be seen a center which doubtless spread from a single pioneer alfalfa grower, other centers in connection with this crop having sprung up at a later date in other parts of the State. The center of apple production in the southern townships of Lawrence county illustrates what may be accomplished in the hills by a demonstration of a good method of apple growing.



A comparison of the maps for the year 1909 with those for the previous year has proven very interesting. With such crops as maple syrup, for instance, the centers of production have remained the same. With some other crops the variation has been slight, while in case of clover seed, for instance, the maps for the two years are radically different. The study has not progressed far enough to produce certain evidence of the spreading of any of the newer crop centers of production or of the contracting of the centers of production of any of the crops. It will be manifest, however, that such spreading or contracting will become evident on these maps as soon as it does appear in the statistics.

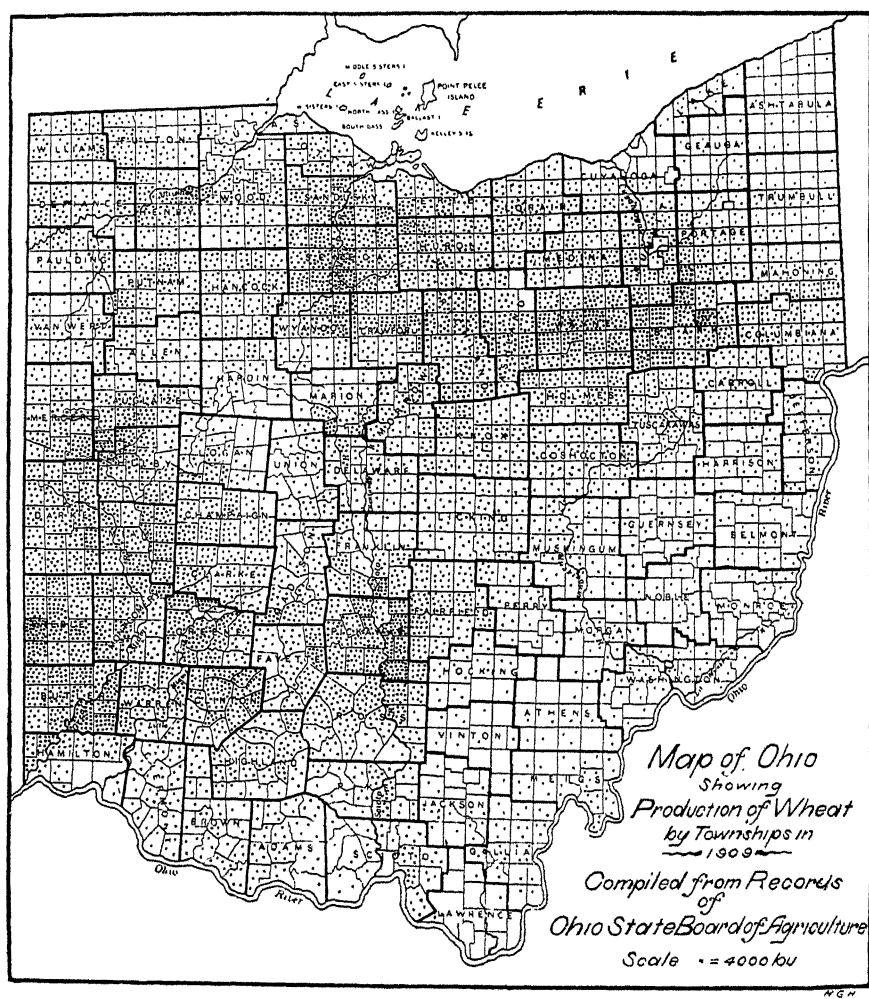


Even a hasty examination of these few sample maps will probably develop some surprises. Many will wonder, for instance, why the counties in the so-called wheat area of northern Ohio show no greater production of wheat than do some counties in southwestern Ohio; but if they were to see the maps showing the number of acres sown to wheat in the two areas, they would then realize that in the latter area the shorter rotation causes a greater acreage to be sown to wheat and a consequent greater total production of this crop per square mile in spite of the lower yield per acre. A great many people are disposed to question the accuracy of all statistics. It is

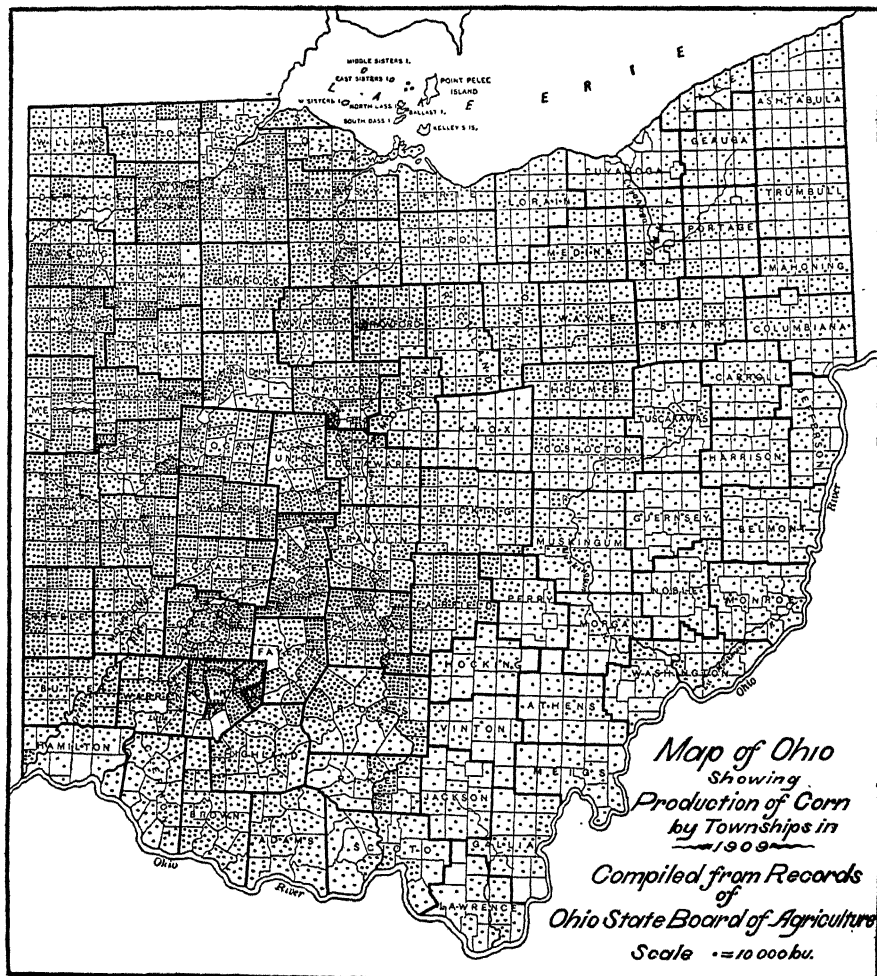


believed, however, that any thoughtful student of Ohio's production will finally decide that while minor errors in the statistics from which these maps were plotted may exist, they are not sufficient to affect seriously their value for use in comparisons of this kind.

The more careful observer may and probably will, discover manifest errors which in all probability unfortunately do exist. For instance, for one of the very good townships of the State no report whatever regarding any crop has been made. In some other cases the indications have been very plain that in copying, the decimal points have not been placed where they belonged. In plot-

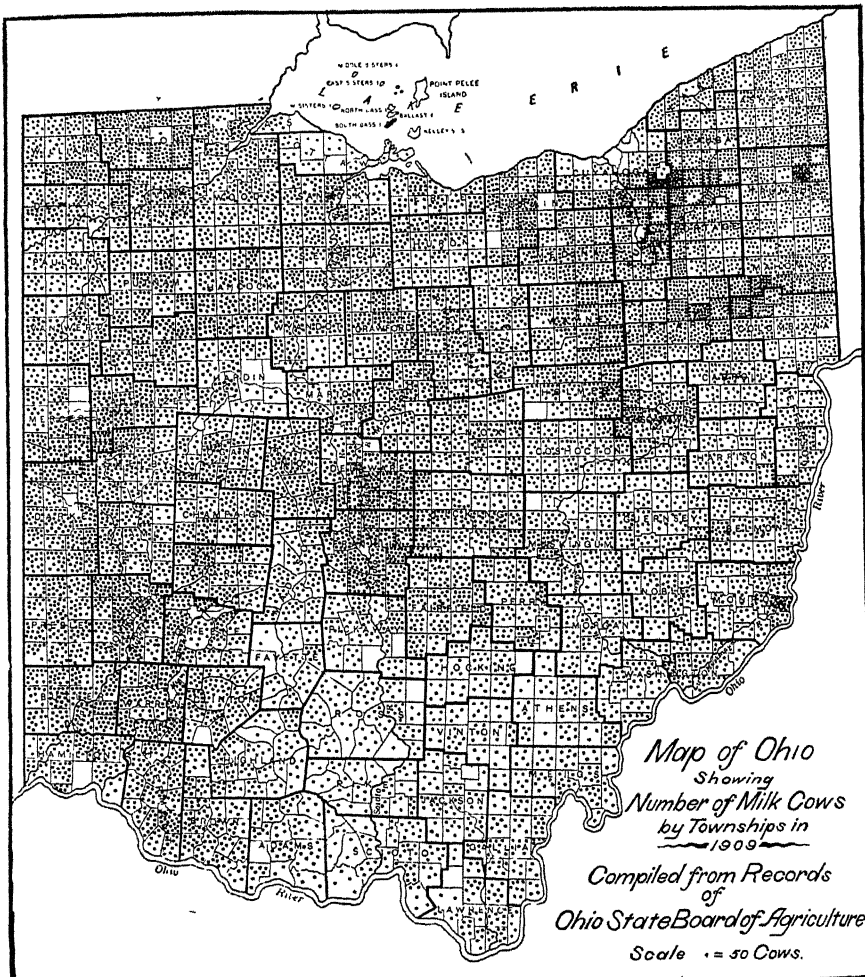


ting the maps for the year 1908, the effort was made to rectify these errors, so far as possible, but after some consideration it was decided to plot the 1909 figures just as they were returned, with the thought that if they were presented to the public in that way and especial attention was called to the value of such statistics, greater accuracy might be secured in the future. And since the year 1910 is census year, it was thought that this would be a very good year in which to make the start. It is well known that the United States Bureau of Census is making a special effort to have the agricultural statistics which they gather this year much more

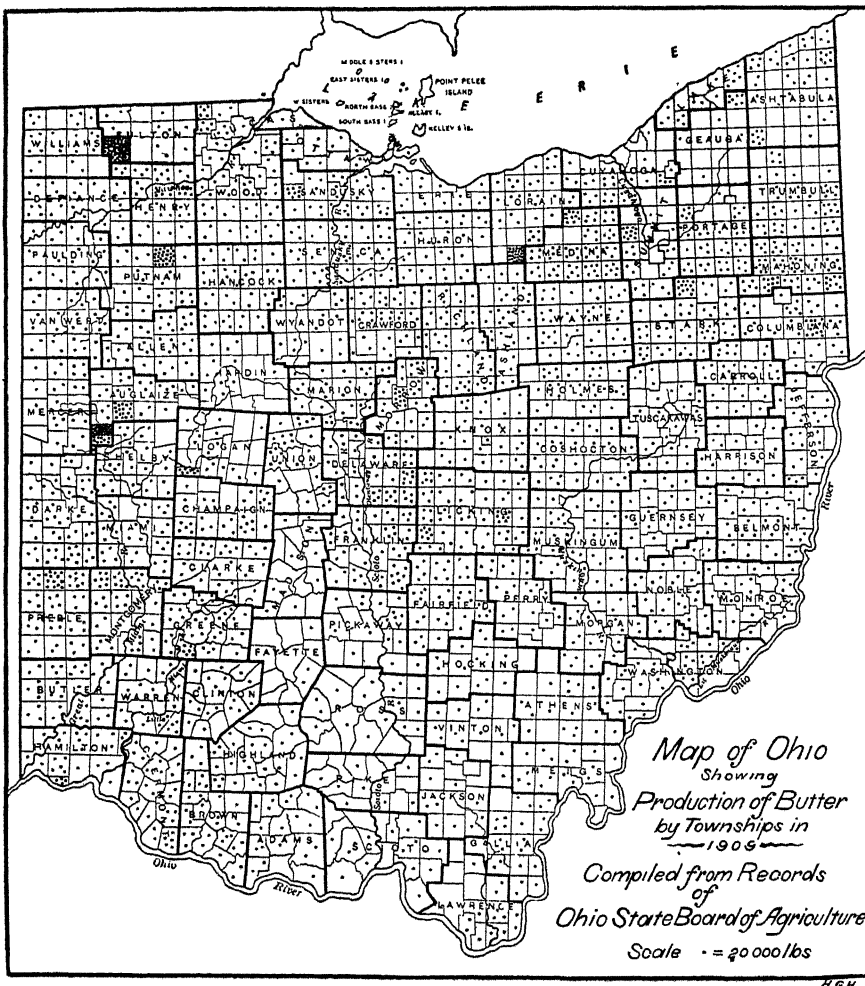


accurate than ever before. Why should not Ohio make an equal effort? And again, why should not Ohio's statistics for the year 1910 be as accurate as those of the Bureau of Census? The same people give information to both the assessors and the Census enumerators, and certainly the former should be just as accurate as are the latter.

Ordinarily, the Census returns are compiled by county only; whereas, as will be manifest from these maps, it is very important that the statistics shall be compiled by township. On almost every map striking variations within the boundaries of a number of counties, will be evident. In considering the possibility of using the



Census report, the Director of the Census was asked to make an estimate of the cost of compiling their statistics by township instead of by county. He accordingly had tabulated by township on their new tabulating machines the 1900 records of acreage and yield of the corn crop of Delaware county and on the basis of time used for that tabulation, estimated that for the entire state, it would cost extra for this township tabulation of the 1910 corn crop figures from \$125 to \$175. For some crops the tabulation would not cost so much but for others it might cost still more. They also advised that in order for them to be able to do it even at these prices, they must know of Ohio's desire before they take up the regular work.

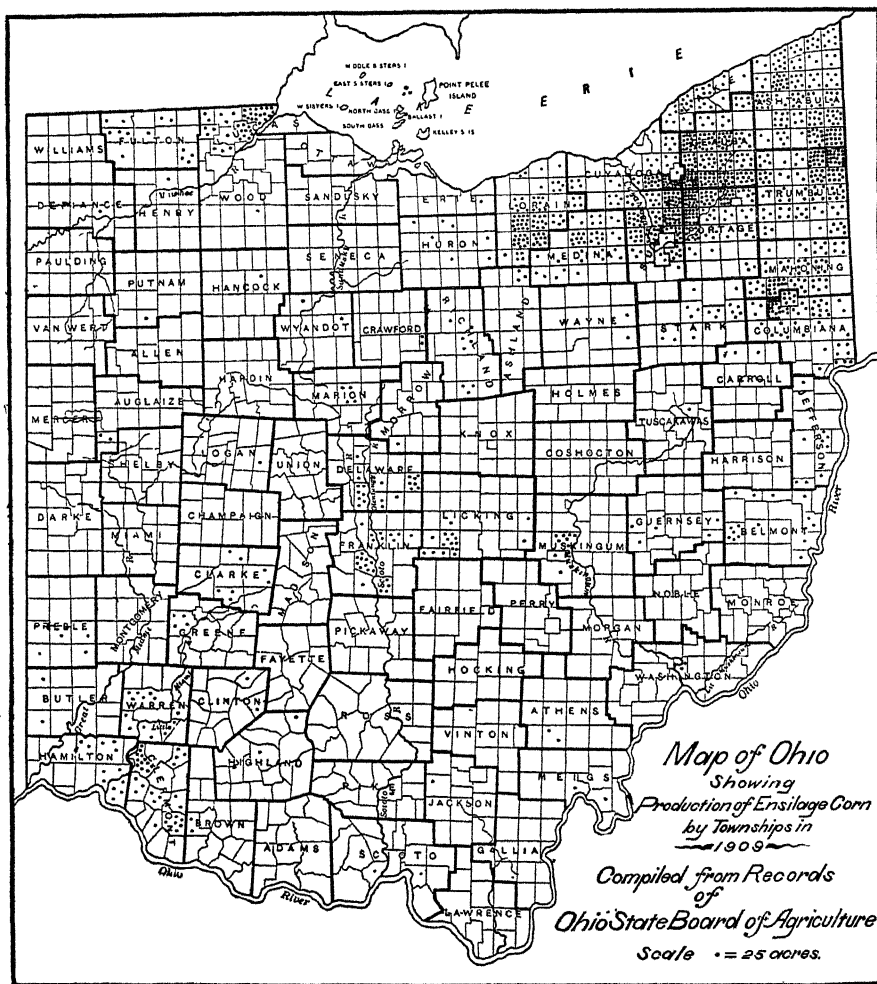


In the light of these figures and in view of the fact that yearly statistics are many-fold more valuable to Ohio than are decade statistics, is it not worth while for every auditor and every assessor in the State to undertake to have these Ohio statistics just as complete and just as accurate as the best. Certainly, if it is not worth doing in the best possible manner, it is not worth doing at all.

If the officers above mentioned will undertake to do their part the Experiment Station, on the other hand, will undertake to present the work to the people in connection with its Farm Management work, and through the still greater work, the Agricultural Survey of the State, which it hopes to undertake in the near future.



When the Ohio and Census statistics are both available, the Experiment Station proposes to compare them county by county and, if funds are available, to make arrangements with the Bureau of Census to tabulate their statistics of a single crop by township, in order that the comparison may be carried still further into detail. In letters of March 15th and 22d, 1910, the Director of the Census proposes cooperation with Ohio in learning wherein lie the causes of any variation which may exist between the Census and State statistics for this year. The auditor of one county has offered to assist in this comparison by making available for this purpose the original returns of the assessors of his county. Others will



doubtless be glad to do so likewise. There is no question but that all the auditors of the State have the welfare of the State at heart, and will do all in their power to promote it. The same could doubtless be said of the assessors.

The Experiment Station would therefore make a special appeal to the county auditors of Ohio to bring this matter to the attention of their assessors, in the hope that errors on their part may be avoided this year, and then to use the utmost care in making their own tabulations in order that when the work is complete we may all be proud of our State statistics.



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